

Testimony In Support of HB 6616: “An Act Concerning Expansion Of Husky Health Benefits To Those Ineligible Due To Immigration Status”

Dear Members of the Human Services Committee of the Connecticut General Assembly:

My name is Robbie Goodrich, I am the executive director of a Waterbury-based education advocacy organization that fights for racial equity and social justice in our schools. I am also a parent and proud ally and supporter of the Husky 4 Immigrants coalition.

I stand in support of HB 6616: “An Act Concerning Expansion Of Husky Health Benefits To Those Ineligible Due To Immigration Status”. Expanding access to HUSKY regardless of immigration status is the moral and ethical obligation of legislators and by doing so you are creating a Connecticut with more healthy families and a stable, thriving and growing workforce for Connecticut. As an organization and former educator in Waterbury we know that our immigrant families are our future. Plain and simple, if we choose not to support them with increased access to healthcare through Husky we are sacrificing the health and welfare of our entire state now and in the future.

Supporting the expansion this year is an easy decision. In years past you and your colleagues have gradually increased access and this year we must expand access up to age 26. There are many reasons to support HB 6616. Here are mine:

- **Investing in healthcare for immigrant communities is an investment in the future of Connecticut and will reduce healthcare costs in the long run. Savings to hospitals from reduced uncompensated care costs could amount to roughly \$63.3 million.**
- **COVID Recovery: If we want Connecticut to recover from COVID-19, we must work toward ensuring that undocumented immigrants of all ages can access health care. Leaving undocumented parents and adults behind means leaving a large portion of essential workers on the frontlines of the pandemic behind.**
- **Healthy Kids Need Healthy Families: If we want healthy kids, the best way to achieve that is to have healthy parents—but currently, we’re leaving undocumented parents behind. Children do better when their parents do better. It has been proven that when parents and caregivers have access to health care, their children are more likely to be insured and to use and receive care.**

It is for these reasons and more I stand in full support of HB 6616.

Respectfully,

Robert M. Goodrich
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